

March 4, 1977

# F.A.S.

## FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS

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### WHY YOU NEED US AND WE NEED YOU

An increasing number of citizen groups of all kinds want your support but only one, the Federation of American Scientists, represents you in your capacity as a scientist with a conscience. And while the citizen groups can appeal to citizens of all kinds, we must rely upon scientist constituents like yourself.

Dear Colleague:

Have you done anything lately to fulfill your responsibilities as a socially concerned scientist? We can help you do so. And for that purpose we have here provided unusual insights into the workings and the conclusions of our unique organization.

To reveal the way in which we work, some of our achievements, and the intimate style with which we report to our members, we have attached the membership renewal letter of last year.

To reveal some of the conclusions we have reached, we have provided our lead editorials on a number of recent vital issues:

Soviet Civil Defense  
Recombinant DNA

Scientific Responsibility  
Proliferation

and samples of our reflections on the World Federation of Scientific Workers, and on Cancer and the Environment.

And to reveal some of the problems we now face, we would like to mention:

- \* That the arms race is heating up again with charges of impending Soviet strategic superiority mixed with a number of critically important decisions on weapons procurement: B-1 bomber, cruise missile, MX missile.
- \* That the world is rocking along without adequate food reserves.
- \* That the technological capacity to build nuclear weapons is spreading rapidly and that only quick political footwork on an international basis can prevent nuclear proliferation.
- \* That toxic substances are still being strewn into the environment without adequate pre-market testing.

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### National Council Members (Elected)

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Alvin Weinberg  
Robert H. Williams



\*That excessive Ph.D. production is about to produce a generation of disaffected intellectuals unless some good use for their talents is found.

and on, and on, and on.

We work on all these issues and send our members just what we send the Congress and the Executive Branch, a concise monthly survey of the issue, topped off with the kind of editorial conclusions provided here. Included among the many questions we have treated in this fashion are:

|                |                           |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nuclear Power  | Energy Policy             | Scientists in the White House   |
| CIA            | National Health Insurance | Privacy of Communications       |
| SALT           | Automobile Emissions      | Occupational Health & Safety    |
| Oil            | Research & Development    | Helsinki Accord & the Scientist |
| Inflation      | Nuclear First Use         | Limited Strategic Attacks       |
| Law of the Sea | Visit to China            | Urban-Industrial Complex        |

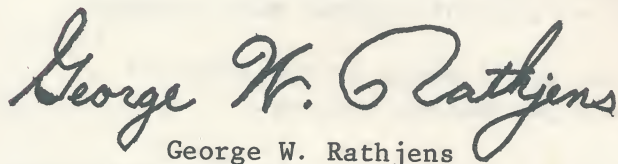
Although many citizen groups appeal to us for scientific advice and support, paradoxically we face a problem in turning to them. We cannot appeal to citizens at large to support work which they immediately recognize is the social responsibility of scientists themselves. Therefore we must, instead, rely upon the numerically limited scientific community. And, because we lobby, we cannot emphasize support from foundations. What we want and must have are members--members whose dues will support our work and whose comments and advice, when they are moved to provide them, will enrich our consideration of the issues.

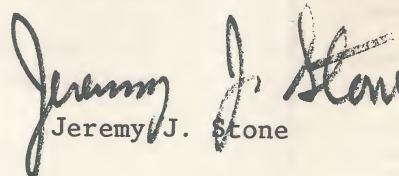
In trying with a membership of only 7,000 scientists to fulfill responsibilities that are those of the entire scientific community, we find it increasingly evident that we will not get much assistance from the traditional scientific societies. While the new tax law permits these societies to engage in substantial amounts of legislative activity, if only they fill out appropriate forms, it is already evident that most have decided--despite our appeal--to forego this possibility.

In short, we are trying to honor certain commitments of the scientific community which none other can honor, which require us to turn to you, and which are uniquely your responsibility. It is with these factors in mind that we ask you to place some priority, amidst the many demands on your time and resources, and to become a member of the Federation of American Scientists.

Why not combine enjoying our Report with the sure knowledge that, in doing so, you are helping the most humane of your colleagues--including a majority of America's most eminent scientists--maintain a tradition of responsible activism?

Sincerely,

  
George W. Rathjens

  
Jeremy J. Stone



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October 29, 1977

Dear Member:

F.A.S. made a difference--a big difference--in 1975-76, and its success was publicly acknowledged surprisingly often. Early in the academic year, F.A.S. turned its attention to the plight of foreign colleagues, especially in the Soviet Union. After a trip report of our Moscow investigation was circulated and other material published, the scientific community began to take this issue much more seriously. The National Academy of Sciences is now refurbishing its procedures and a number of other leading scientific societies (AAAS, APS, AMS) are also. Naturally these societies will be dealing with the defense of scientists everywhere, not only in the Soviet Union. F.A.S. members can be very proud of having persuaded the scientific community to acknowledge this obligation of conscience.

On a most important domestic issue, the B-1 bomber, F.A.S. also catalyzed critical action. Our petition of opposition to the B-1 bomber--when signed by 19 former high defense officials--had a dramatic effect on the Senate B-1 debate. We knew the vote would be close. We knew that no strategic weapon system had ever failed to gain approval after reaching the floor of the Senate. Imagine our astonishment, therefore, when the NBC Nightly News predicted that the B-1 would not be approved--and assigned this unprecedented action to our petition. And imagine how we felt when the prophecy was vindicated three days later.

Because we catalyzed this victory, the House-Senate conference committee was able later to delay the B-1 production decision until after the election. Now there is a real chance to halt this program. And if it is halted, you and every other citizen will be saved about \$500 for an absurd project: a bomber in a missile age; a new bomber force when we already have a bomber force; a bomber force, in any case, badly designed for its avowed purpose. (Your membership dues may have been the best investment you made last year).

F.A.S. played a quiet but effective role in the death of the Nuclear Fuel Assurance Act by highlighting a few small but important provisions which had been generally overlooked, and by summarizing its complex structure. This bill was designed to permit private industry to take over the nuclear fuel enrichment business, but it guaranteed industry against virtually any risk. A number of legislative aides called our circular letter to Representatives the most helpful document introduced from outside the House of Representatives. The House voted down the bill, largely for the reasons we championed. It then reversed itself by one vote when it was assured that the guarantees we opposed would be deleted.

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F.A.S. discovered the next day that the amendment which purported to delete the guarantees in question was hopelessly ineffective. We rang alarm bells and stimulated the GAO to investigate--an investigation that confirmed our assertion. It was, very largely, this GAO confirmation that persuaded the Senate to put the bill off and let it die until a new Administration could review the matter. While many other groups opposed this bill and did so effectively, we felt it was an example where high-quality analysis and scientific vigilance could and did make a critical difference.

On those issues where F.A.S. had no consensus, we were still useful. An example of such an issue was Recombinant DNA. The public official at the center of the controversy warmly received the summary of the problem contained in our April Report:

"F.A.S. has performed an important service to science and the public in this presentation. It will instantly become one of the important references to the subject of Recombinant DNA research. You and your staff are to be commended highly for the skill and balance with which it is put together."

--Dr. Donald S. Fredrickson, Director, National Institutes of Health

On the Threshold Test Ban, reporters predicted that our opposition might scuttle ratification of the treaty by the Senate in this term; indeed, this did result. Our reasoned opposition has been further vindicated by the extreme technical difficulty the Administration is now having in determining whether Soviet nuclear tests are above or below the threshold negotiated.

We will not dilate further upon our achievements, tangible or otherwise. The point we want to emphasize is that we made good use of your \$20. Surviving, as usual, on the dues of our 7,000 members, we kept F.A.S. in the forefront of scientific responsibility. Scientific organizations with 500 times our budget or 15 times our members often did far less to integrate science into the life of our society.

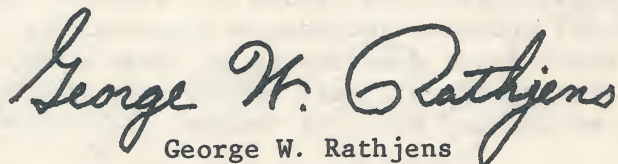
We hope that, in addition to sharing this accomplishment, you have enjoyed reading the F.A.S. Report. Above all we hope that you continue to feel that your membership in F.A.S. discharges at least part of your social responsibilities as a scientist. In the Spring, we found this endorsement in an editorial elsewhere:

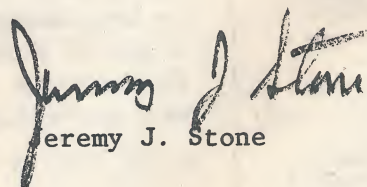
Cynics have said that during the course of social evolution the human conscience has become a vestigial organ. That this is not the case is shown very clearly by the past and present activities of the F.A.S...."

--Sir Peter Medawar, Nobel Laureate in Medicine & Physiology

You can help keep conscience from becoming a vestigial organ by renewing your membership now (by sending us the \$20 calendar year 1977 dues and anything else you can spare). For our part, we will try to make 1977 a year in which you can be proud of F.A.S. and of the scientific community more generally.

Sincerely,

  
George W. Rathjens

  
Jeremy J. Stone